

Los Alamos Branch AAUW September 2010

Fall Kickoff Luncheon Saturday, September 25 11:30 am Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Our annual fall meeting will be held at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church on North St. The Meeting room is at the right of the parking lot. The entrance is via the middle doors.

Our speaker will be our own Cas Mason. She will discuss her book about WWII. Her book recounts experiences of urban children from London who were sent to the countryside to be safer during the bombings. It is based on letters from her older siblings and relatives.

We will have a short business meeting at 11:30AM, followed by study group presentations. We are asking all study group chairs to please be prepared to make a short presentation regarding what they do and what the plans are for the coming year. There will be tables available to set up displays and sign-up sheets.

This luncheon is a potluck. Please bring a dish to share. Also it is our tradition to bring our own place settings for lunch. Coffee and tea will be provided.

Please consider asking a friend or neighbor to join you. They will get the opportunity to learn about our organization.

Branch News:

Our branch received a \$350 check from the LANL Community Projects Office. It represents volunteer hours of Cas Mason and Helena Whyte.

We will be asked to vote to accept the following budget proposal for fiscal year 2010-2011 at the fall luncheon. Changes to the budget may be made from the floor.

Proposed Budget
for fiscal year 2010-2011

Revenues for branch

Branch Dues	\$570.00	Assuming 66 members of whom 9 are honorary life members
Donations	\$100.00	
Interest	\$5.00	
from Savings	\$515.00	

Total Revenues for branch \$1,190.00

Expenditures for branch

Officers:

Historian	\$10.00
Yearbook	\$10.00
Newsletter	\$50.00
Facility Rental	\$180.00
Programs	\$230.00
EF Fund Raising	\$15.00
Membership	\$30.00
Hospitality	\$15.00
Treasurer	\$10.00
President Fund	\$15.00

Sponsorships:

Donation for LWV Voter Guide	\$150.00	Will apply for State mini-grant to pay for this.
Science Fair	\$75.00	
Women in Science(EYH)	\$50.00	
Conventions	\$220.00	May be some help from state to pay for national convention attendee

Administrative:

Post Office Box	\$45.00
NM Corporation Report	\$10.00

Miscellaneous: \$75.00

Total Expenditures for branch \$1,190.00

Biography of the Month:

Maria Agnesi's father was Pietro Agnesi, a wealthy nobleman and a professor of mathematics at the University of Bologna. It was normal in that time for the daughters of noble families to be taught in convents, and to receive instruction in religion, household management and dressmaking. A few Italian families educated daughters in more academic subjects; a few attended lectures at the university or even lectured there.

Pietro Agnesi recognized the talents and intelligence of his daughter Maria. Treated as a child prodigy, she was given tutors to learn five languages (Greek, Hebrew, Latin, French and Spanish) and also philosophy and science.

In 1738, Maria Agnesi assembled almost 200 of the speeches she had presented to her father's gatherings, and published them in Latin as *Propositiones philosophicae*. But the topics went beyond philosophy as we think of the topic today, and included scientific topics like celestial mechanics, Isaac Newton's gravitation theory, and elasticity.

Pietro Agnesi married twice more after Maria's mother died, so that Maria Agnesi ended up the eldest of 21 children. In addition to her performances and lessons, her responsibility was to teach her siblings. This task kept her from her own goal of entering a convent.

In 1738, wanting to do the best job of communicating up-to-date mathematics to her younger brothers, Maria Agnesi began to write a mathematics textbook, which absorbed her for ten years.

The *Instituzioni Analitiche* was published in 1748 in two volumes, over one thousand pages. The first volume covered arithmetic, algebra, trigonometry, analytic geometry and calculus. The second volume covered infinite series and differential equations. No one

before had published a text on calculus that included the methods of calculus of both Isaac Newton and Gottfried Leibnitz.

Maria Agnesi brought together ideas from many contemporary mathematical thinkers -- made easier by her ability to read in many languages -- and integrated many of the ideas in a novel way that impressed the mathematicians and other scholars of her day.

As recognition of her achievement, in 1750 she was appointed to the chair of mathematics and natural philosophy at the University of Bologna by an act of Pope Benedict XIV. She was also recognized by the Hapsburg Empress Maria Theresa of Austria.

Did Maria Agnesi ever accept the Pope's appointment? Was it a real appointment or an honorary one? So far, the historical record does not answer those questions.

Maria Agnesi's name lives on in the name that English mathematician John Colson gave to a mathematical problem -- finding the equation for a certain bell-shaped curve. Colson confused the word in Italian for "curve" for a somewhat similar word for "witch," and so today this problem and equation still carries the name "witch of Agnesi" http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Witch_of_Agnesi.

Maria Agnesi's father was seriously ill by 1750 and died in 1752. His death released Maria from her responsibility to educate her siblings, and she used her wealth and her time to help those less fortunate. She established in 1759 a home for the poor. In 1771 she headed up a home for the poor and ill. By 1783 she was made director of a home for the elderly, where she lived among those she served. She had given away everything she owned by the time she died in 1799, and Maria Agnesi was buried in a pauper's grave.

Book Group: The book selection meeting is September 1 at 7 pm at the Rozelle Wright's, 213 Barranca Road. Bring suggestions of books that you have read and that are available in paperback and that you would be willing to review. Send Rozelle, (rozelle@losalamos.com) your suggestions before the meeting so that she can forward them to the group members.

The September book is A Guide to the Birds of East Africa by Nicholas Drayson. The September 13th meeting will be held at 7:30pm at the home of Denise George, 411 Cheryl. Carol Neal, 3451 Urban, is hosting the September 14th, 2 pm meeting. The reviewer is Rozelle Wright.

Non-Fiction Book Group: The next meeting will be Monday, September 20th at Deepa Nadiga's, 5525 Quemazon, at 7:30pm. The book is Wild Trees by John Carlin. Peggy Lazarus is the reviewer. The November book is From Berkeley to Beijing by Karin Kendall.

World Cultures through Foods: Contact Marilyn Minshall (672-3499) for more information.

Great Decisions:

This group meets after the first of the year. Books are ordered in advance. Contact the coordinator if you wish to participate this year.

The day time group is coordinated by Carroll Thomas (672-1937).

The evening group is coordinated by Helena Whyte (672-9153).

Study Group Schedules are posted at:

http://aauw-nm.org/los_alamos_study_groups.html

Study group chairs are asked to send schedules and any changes to Denise at georgeje@acm.org

Branch Calendar

Sept	1	Book Group, 7:00pm, Rozelle Wright, 213 Barranca Road
Sept	13	Book Group, 7:30pm, Denise George, 411 Cheryl
Sept	14	Book Group, 2:00 pm, Carol Neal, 3451 Urban
Sept	20	Non-fiction book group, 7:30pm, Deepa Nadiga, 5525 Quemazon
Sept	25	Fall Luncheon, 11:30 am, Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Coordinating Council for 2009-2010

Rozelle Wright	Treasurer	662-5490	rozelle@losalamos.com
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Jane Sherwood	Hospitality	662-3194	jane.sherwood@att.net
Denise George	Newsletter	672-9688	mozden08@aol.com
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